

21 September 2015

Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome back to the new school year

Welcome back to the start of a new academic year which I am pleased to say has got off to an excellent start. I would also like to say a special welcome to all the new parents and students who have joined us.

We have begun the year celebrating the exceptional success of our students' performance in their GCSE, BTEC, A level and AS examinations. The headlines are:

Year 13-A Level

At A level over 72% of the grades were an A, B or C grade and 100% were A to E grades. This also includes a double pass in the BTEC level 3 Science course. Once again we managed to get our sixth form students to their first choice Universities. Well done to all our Year 13 students but a particularly big congratulation must go to Oscar Anderson who will be studying a degree in Psychology this year at Bournemouth University.

Year 12-AS

At AS level an outstanding 83% of students achieved either an A, B or C grade and there was a 100% A to E pass rate.

Year 12-iGCSE English

This is a vitally important course as it is put on for those students who did not attain a grade C in their GCSE English by the end of their Year 11 studies. Here, 100% of our students gained a grade C setting themselves up for the next stages in the academic journeys. Congratulations to last year's Year 12.

GCSE

We are also thrilled to be celebrating some of the best GCSE results for several years from last year's group of Year 11 students. Despite the evermore rigorous requirements being demanded by the government and examination boards we are delighted that close to 50% of our students achieved 5 or more A*-C grades in the June examinations. When looking at the value added data for these exams results, it can be seen that every student achieved one grade higher than expected in every one of their subjects! There were also some exceptional individual attainments:

- Robert Peters A*A*B C C C

- Jacob Foulger A*A B C C C C
- Daniel Foss A B B C C C

Congratulations to all last year's Year 11 on some exceptional results.

Staffing news

I am very excited by the challenge of building on this year's exam success and we are pleased to welcome a number of new, inspiring staff to our team at Slindon College to support us on our journey to being outstanding in every way:

New Teaching staff

Emily Coffey	Head of English faculty
Kevin Kelly	Teacher of ICT
Tina Palermo	Wave 3 teacher (Starts January 2016)
Joan Bull	Teacher of English (3 days a week)
John Redmond	Teacher of Humanities

New LSAs

Tina Hunt
 Jessica Chandler (Art)
 Kelly Donovan (Art)
 Harriet Norgrove

Administration

Jenni Rogerson.

We also have some current members of staff who have taken on additional roles within our school:

- Steve Smart is now the ICT Manager across the school
- Paul Burbidge has taken on the teaching of our Motor Mechanics course
- Mike Sargeant who will be the technician for the Motor Mechanics course

I know that new colleagues and existing staff alike look forward to the new term with energy and enthusiasm.

New school initiatives

At Slindon College our key focus is on teaching and learning and we recognise each student as an individual, supporting them to achieve their full potential in an environment where they enjoy their learning and participate in the opportunities on offer. In order to fulfil our vision we have instigated several new initiatives this year.

1. Target Grades/Levels

All students in our school will be set aspirational target grades. These grades will be based on prior performance. For students in Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9), the target is an end of year target level that is based on the old National Curriculum levels. For students in Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5, the target is an end course target grade. Throughout the year you will be sent home progress reports for your son. These reports will now contain their aspirational targets for each subject. The full written reports will also contain what your son will need to do in order to achieve it under the section "next steps". If you have any concerns at any time on the progress your son is making with us, please do not hesitate to contact us, so issues can be resolved early on.

2. ICT and Electronic Devices

We have made a few changes in this area of school life for this year. All computer games have been switched off across the school for both Day and Boarding students. They should therefore not be able to access any games at any time whilst they are with us. A sanction will be enforced on any student found playing computer games.

Students in Key Stage 3 (Years 7, 8 and 9) are not allowed mobile phones in school this year. Boarding students must leave their mobile phones in their safes during the day. If a student brings a mobile phone to school they should leave it with Jenny in the front office at the start of the day and then pick it up from her when they leave school to go home.

Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11) and Key Stage 5 (Sixth form) students are allowed to bring their mobile phones in to school. They must however be switched off during lessons. A sanction will be implemented on any student who has used their mobile phone in an inappropriate way.

3. Homework

Last year we reintroduced homework to **Key Sage 4**. Clearly this action had a positive effect as our exam results were excellent. We will therefore continue with this policy. The homework timetable will remain the same as last year. That is:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
English	Maths	Science	Option subjects (inc. ICT)	Option subjects (inc. ICT)

We have now decided to introduce homework for the core subjects to **Key Stage 3**. The homework time table is:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
English	English	Maths	Maths	Free

In order to assist students with their homework we now have:

- A homework club every lunchtime from 1330 to 1350
- A homework club after school every day (except Friday) from 1600 to 1700
- Flexiboarding Plus where students (for a small fee) can stay after school until 1930hrs allowing them to do their homework within our boarding house.

4. Lunchtime Activities

This year we have decided to start up lunchtime activities for all students. There will therefore be up to four activities each day for the students to choose from. These activities will run from 1325 until 1350. This new initiative has been introduced jointly with an increase in the number of duty staff. We now have seven members of staff on duty, in and around school every break and lunch time. The activities on offer range from Art club to Forestry club. Further information can be obtained from Jenny in our front office.

5. Safeguarding

I have given every student in school a leaflet entitled “What to do about bullying-guidelines for parents and students”. I have also discussed this leaflet with all students in a whole school assembly. Our school is a “telling school” and we run a “no touching policy”. I have attached the leaflet and I would be grateful if you would spend a short time going through it with your son so that he feels safe within our school. I would also like to inform you of the latest safeguarding initiative from the DFE called the Prevent Duty. Prevent is about safeguarding people and communities from the threat of terrorism. It aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. We have introduced several initiatives this year to support the Prevent policy. One of which involves your son having an ICT lesson based around internet safety particular emphasis being on terror organisations and on line grooming. Please use this link http://www.itai.info/?dm_i=14DE,3MBFB,5PBGK9,D17RR,1 if you would like to find out more about Prevent.

Your chance to make a difference

Education and your child’s success is about the school working in partnership with you to ensure that your child reaches their true potential, wherever their talents lies. I would therefore like to start up a Parent Council this year. The Parent Council would be a group of parents who support the work of the school, share ideas and represent parents' views. The group would comprise of approximately 8-10 parents and 2-3 members of staff, myself included. They would meet once every half term and all meetings would be very informal. Agendas for the meetings would be drawn up one week before the meeting and circulated to the council members. Any agenda items would therefore need to be submitted before this point.

Slindon College’s Parent Council would be involved in providing parents' views on:

- Information parents require on the Curriculum
- Structure for implementation of the Curriculum
- Types of clubs/activities offered by the college
- Changes to timings of parent consultation evenings
- Supported study / Easter revision/holiday work
- Raising attainment

- Homework policy
- Understanding assessment
- Understanding the new SEND criteria

NOTE: The Parent Council would discuss and represent views on general school matters. It would not discuss matters concerning individual pupils.

If you are interested in being part of the parent council then, in the first instance, I would be grateful if you would pass your name on to me at headmasterspa@slindoncollege.co.uk.

Finally, I would like to thank you in advance for working with us to ensure the best for your child. We look forward to a happy and successful year, where we continue to celebrate and be proud of all our students.

DAVID QUICK
HEADMASTER